

Appendix 3 Organisational Responses

RNIB

Response to Question 2

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this consultation. We encourage you to consider the crucial role of the vision rehabilitation service delivered by the Merton Council; I hope that the below information is helpful in working towards the best possible outcomes for blind and partially sighted people. There is an urgent need to ensure that vision rehabilitation services get the right resources to 'See, plan and provide':

- See: everyone with a visual impairment receives a specialist face to face assessment.
- Plan: everyone has a plan in place, identifying the outcome of their assessment. The first two steps take place within 28 days of first contact with the council.
- Provide: any agreed vision rehabilitation support starts within 12 weeks of the person's initial contact with the council.

You will no doubt be aware that when vision rehabilitation services are properly resourced, the crucial training and advice they provide can make a huge difference to the daily lives of people experiencing sight loss. People can gain the skills and confidence to maximise their independence, participate in activities and access their community. By supporting blind and partially sighted people to live independently at home, it can also prevent, reduce or delay the need for expensive care packages whilst helping local authorities to meet their duty to provide preventative support under the Care Act. We understand that your council will soon be considering its budget for the coming year. During this process we urge you to consider the vital importance of vision rehabilitation. Given that numbers of blind and partially sighted people are increasing, we believe that ensuring the right resources now will prepare local services for the future. RNIB works with local authorities across the country to promote vision rehabilitation and share examples of best practice. For any support, feel free to contact us on campaigns@rnib.org.uk or visit www.rnib.org.uk/seeandplan

Response to Question 5

Please see response to question 3 regarding preventative value of vision rehabilitation support. RNIB has commissioned new research (scheduled for release in December) to demonstrate the cost savings that can be achieved by effective vision rehabilitation services.

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